Public Relations Function and Activities in the Food Marketing Industry

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by

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The Food Marketing Institute (FMI) is a non-profit association that conducts programs in research, education and public affairs on behalf of its 1100 members—food wholesalers and retailers and their customers in the United States and overseas. FMI's domestic member companies operate over 17,000 retail food stores with a combined annual sales volume of $120 billion—half of all grocery sales in the United States. More than two-thirds of FMI's membership is comprised of independent supermarket operators or small regional firms. Its international membership includes more than 100 members from 37 nations.

Executive Summary

There is a broad variety in the way the public relations function is handled by individual food distribution companies. Some may have a formal structure with a public relations department. Others may rely on a loosely knit organization with people within the firm acting as spokesmen.

This report supplies a profile of the person in food retail and wholesale companies who has primary responsibility for public relations. Independent retailers, large retailers and wholesalers all approach the position, the responsibilities and the activities differently. In the majority of independent cases, the top executive has primary public relations responsibility. For larger retailers, however, a vice president or a director will usually have this responsibility. In wholesale companies, the person with public relations responsibility will usually have the title of director or manager. Most companies will also designate one or more executives to help with these responsibilities.

The typical public relations department in larger companies will consist of one professional person and one clerical person.

In larger companies, some functions and activities are clearly within the domain of public relations. These include media relations, community relations, press releases, contributions and donations, and choosing personnel to speak at events. Some functions are often the responsibility of another department, such as employee relations, sales, marketing and advertising, and labor relations.

Outside public relations consultants were seldom hired by the responding companies. However, when they are hired, they are asked to do a wide variety of activities from media relations to consumer studies to financial relations.

Although companies will often have a primary media and community contact, there will usually be one or more secondary contacts.

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Introduction

The Supermarket Industry is one of the most visable of all American business enterprises. This highly "public" image virtually demands that a "public relations" function be incorporated into the business infrastructure.

According to Philip Lesly, one of the country's leading authorities in the field of public relations,

> "Public relations started as publicity—now just one of its phases—because, as it became harder for people with different backgrounds to understand and know about each other, *the first necessity was for one group to tell others about itself.* In developing, public relations has come to include a great many other functions besides telling about someone or some group. It also tells the group what others think of it; it helps the group determine what it must do to get the good will of others; it plans ways and means of winning that good will; and it carries on activities designed to win it. In the process of doing these things, it encompasses a great many functions, concepts, and techniques—including the range of functions in "public affairs" that help an organization come into confluence with the social forces affecting it." (Emphasis added)

The average food shopper will visit a supermarket more than once a week. And because questions regarding the supermarket are raised by these shoppers as well as community groups, business, government and the news media, food companies must be ready to respond to a variety of issues and questions. How they approach this responsibility is the subject of this study.

We would like to extend our appreciation to those on the FMI Public Information Committee for their encouragement and direction. They originally suggested that a study of this type be conducted in order to provide a picture of the typical public relations executive. This description will be useful to better serve the needs of the FMI membership.

Methodology

In the beginning of 1982, three surveys designed to help profile the public relations function and responsibility in the food distribution industry were sent to FMI members. So as to lessen the response burden of each company, three unique questionnaires were developed and sent to three different types of companies. A core group of questions were asked in each survey but the larger companies were asked to respond to detailed questions concerning the public relations function. Each member received one survey depending on its type of organization: one was especially designed for independents, those retailers with annual sales below $50 million; one was for larger retailers, those with annual sales above $50 million; and, the third was for wholesalers.

Useable responses were received from 185 companies. These companies represented 116 independents, 55 large retailers, and 14 wholesalers. The majority of independents (52 percent) operated two to 10 supermarkets, 46 percent were one-store operators, and two percent operated more than 10 supermarkets. Fifty-two percent of the larger retailers operated 50 or more supermarkets. Calculated by annual sales, the majority of independents (55 percent) had under $10 million in sales and 31 percent had $10 million to $30 million in sales. Thirty-nine percent of the large retailers earned over $500 million in sales, 20 percent had from $251 million to $500 million, 11 percent had $101 million to $250 million and 28 percent had $31 to $100 million in sales. Fifty-seven percent of the wholesalers had over $500 million in annual sales.

Public Relations Structure

Title and Function

Before examining what is accomplished by the person with primary public relations responsibility, let's look at who this person usually is. Although in 25 percent of all companies the president is the person with primary public relations responsibility, the title and function differs considerably when compared by the three different types of companies. These differences between independents, larger retailers and wholesalers will be seen throughout the survey.

Table 1 illustrates the titles of those who have primary responsibility for public relations. In 50 percent of all *independents*, the person with primary public relations responsibility is the president, owner, or chairman of the company. For the remaining 50 percent, the person could be either a vice president, 16 percent, a manager, eight percent, or a director or store manager, both seven percent. For *larger retailers*, this responsibility falls to quite a different group of people. In 40 percent of these companies, a vice president has responsibility for public relations and in 27 percent of the companies, directors have this responsibility. In *wholesale companies*, the majority of people with primary public relations responsibility were either directors (36 percent) or managers (21 percent). All other titles received nominal responses. No function dominated in wholesale companies.

Table 1

Title of Primary Public Relations Person

	Independents	Large Retailer	Wholesaler
Total Companies	116	55	14
	100%	100%	100%
Top Executive	50.0%	9.1%	14.2%
Vice Presidents	16.4%	45.4%	14.3%
Director	6.9%	27.3%	35.7%
Manager	7.8%	5.5%	21.4%
Other	18.9%	12.6%	14.4%

Another way to review this position is by the *function* of this person. Approached in this manner, we find that in 50 percent of all larger retailer operations the person with primary public relations responsibility operates within some area of public relations. The main functions of the key public relations person are shown in Table 2. For instance, 15 percent listed Public Affairs as their functional area, 13 percent listed Public Relations; eight percent, Communications or Consumer Affairs; four percent listed Corporate Affairs; and, two percent, Community Relations. Only one area outside the Public Relations field registered more than a nominal rate. This was Advertising, with 10 percent.

In wholesale companies, although 21 percent of the public relations persons are in Public Relations/Affairs, five other functional areas each received 14 percent. There does not seem to be as clear a division as in the large retailer group.

Table 2

Functions of Primary Public Relations Person

	Independents	Large Retailer	Wholesaler
Total Companies	96	48	14
	100%	100%	100%
Top Executive	61.5%	12.5%	14.3%
Financial, Administration	5.2%	2.1%	14.3%
Operations	14.6%	6.3%	0.0%
Marketing, Sales	0.0%	2.1%	14.3%
Advertising	3.1%	10.4%	7.1%
Public Relations/Affairs	1.0%	27.1%	21.4%
Communications	0.0%	8.3%	14.3%
Human Resources	5.2%	6.3%	14.3%
Other	9.4%	29.9%	24.9%

In most companies, besides the key public relations person, there are other people who also have public relations responsibility. The titles and functions of these people are listed in Tables 3 and 4. In independent retail companies, this may be the top executive (18 percent), the store manager (17 percent), or a vice president (13 percent). Large retailers and wholesalers with more staff can naturally have more people to support the various areas and will often (61 percent) use the top executive to supply public relations expertise. Other vice presidents also have public relations responsibility.

Table 3

Title of Others with Public Relations Responsibility*

	Independents	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	103	37	9
Top Executive	17.5%	60.7%	66.7%
Assistant to President	0.0%	0.0%	22.2%
Vice Presidents	12.7%	37.8%	44.4%
Director	4.9%	27.0%	33.3%
Manager	6.8%	18.9%	0.0%
Store Manager	16.5%	0.0%	0.0%
No one	32.0%	10.8%	0.0%

*More than one response accepted.

The functions of those with public relations duties other than the primary executive vary by company type. In independent companies, they usually come from the operations area (59 percent), and in larger retailers and wholesalers, from top management (57 percent and 67 percent).

Table 4

Function of Others with Public Relations Responsibility*

	Independents	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	54	30	9
Top Executive	33.3%	56.7%	66.7%
Financial, Administration	7.4%	3.3%	22.2%
Operations	59.3%	10.0%	11.1%
Advertising	1.9%	16.7%	11.1%
Consumer Affair	3.7%	13.3%	0.0%
Human Resources	7.4%	16.7%	33.3%

*More than one response accepted.

Time Spent

For the person with primary public relations responsibility, only 21 percent of the respondents spent 50 percent or more of his or her time on public relations, see Table 5. Ten percent of those people spending over 50 percent of their time on public relations are employed in larger companies.

Table 5

Percentage of Time Spent on Public Relations

	Independents	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	100%	100%	100%
	110	50	12
1- 5%	41.8%	26.0%	8.3%
6-10%	24.5%	14.0%	8.3%
11-20%	3.6%	2.0%	16.7%
21-25%	13.7%	16.0%	8.3%
26-50%	12.7%	16.0%	33.3%
51-75%	0.9%	6.0%	8.3%
76-100%	2.7%	20.0%	16.7%

How then is the time spent? When considering only large retailers and wholesalers, other functional areas listed included advertising (30 percent), human resources (23 percent), government affairs (17 percent), operations (15 percent), and communications and marketing (both 13 percent). These are described in Table 6.

Table 6

Other Functions of Primary Public Relations Executive*

	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	38	9
Advertising	26%	44%
Government Affairs	18%	11%
Human Resource	18%	44%
Operations	16%	11%
Marketing, Sales	13%	11%
Communications	13%	11%
Merchandising	11%	0%
Consumer Affairs	11%	0%
Financial, Administration	8%	11%
Corporate Affairs	8%	11%
Quality Assurance	5%	11%
Top Executive	3%	0%
Public Relations	3%	0%
Industrial Relations	3%	0%
Corporate Communications	3%	0%

*More than one response accepted.

Reporting Structure

Table 7 illustrates to whom the primary public relations person reports. For large retailers, 56 percent of those with primary public relations responsibility report to the top executive. In wholesale companies, only 42 percent report to the top executive, whereas 50 percent report to a vice president. This reporting structure is consistent with the title of the primary public relations person. In large retail companies, this is often a vice president, and in wholesale companies, this is usually a director or manager. In 32 percent of the independent companies, only one person has public relations responsibility. This is usually the top executive.

Table 7

Title to Whom Public Relations Person Reports

	Independents	Larger Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	100%	100%	12
	105	52	100%
Top Executive	46.7%	55.8%	41.7%
Vice President	3.8%	38.5%	50.0%
Other	12.4%	5.7%	8.3%
No One	37.1%	0.0%	0.0%

Organization

If there is a public relations department, it will often consist only of one professional person and one clerical person. Tables 8 and 9 show the responses received when companies were asked how many public relations people were employed by the company.

Table 8

Number of Professional Public Relations Employees

	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	40	12
	100%	100%
Number of Employees		
0	12.5%	16.7%
1-1.5	40.0%	50.0%
2	17.5%	25.0%
3	15.0%	0.0%
4 +	15.0%	8.3%

Table 9

Number of Clerical Public Relations Employees

	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	29	12
	100%	100%
Number of Employees		
0	24.1%	25.0%
0.5	3.4%	8.3%
1	44.8%	58.3%
2-3	13.7%	8.3%
4 +	13.7%	6.0%

In most large companies (82 percent) the public relations function is centralized. This is more true for larger retailers (84 percent) than wholesalers (73 percent), see Table 10.

Table 10

Organization within Company of Public Relations Function

	Large Retailer	Wholesaler
Total Companies	50	11
	100%	100%
Centralized	84.0%	72.7%
Decentralized	16.0%	27.3%

Budget

Wholesalers and large retailers were asked what percent of the public relations budget was devoted to salaries and programs. Some companies did not answer this question and others, as seen in Tables 11 and 12, wrote that they did not have a budget. Only 17 retailers and 2 wholesalers responded that some portion of their budget went to salaries and programs. For approximately 38 percent of all large retail companies responding to this question, salaries took less than 50 percent of their budget while 26.8 percent said salaries took 50 percent or more of their budget. In the program area, 37.6 percent of the large retailers said programs took at least 50 percent of their budget.

Table 11

Percent of Budget for Salaries

	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	26	5
	100%	100%
None	36.6%	60.0%
Less than 50%	38.3%	40.0%
50% or more	26.8%	0.0%

Table 12

Percent of Budget for Programs

	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	24	4
	100%	100%
None	41.7%	50.0%
Less than 50%	20.9%	0.0%
50% or more	37.6%	50.0%

In considering contributions as a part of the budget, companies answered that contributions, either small or large, were included in their public relations budget. As seen in Table 13, there was a large difference between retailers and wholesalers.

Major contributions are a part of the public relations budget for 57 percent of the large retailers but only 38 percent of the wholesalers. Small contributions are considered part of the budget for 64 percent of the large retailers and 56 percent of the wholesalers.

Table 13

Contributions in Public Relations Budget

	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	46	8
Large Contributions	56.5%	37.5%
Total Companies	45	9
Small Contributions	64.4%	55.6%

There is no single consistant way to handle employee membership dues. Dues include professional societies, health clubs and similar fees. As illustrated in Table 14, approximately 40 percent of all wholesale and retail companies do not have membership dues in their public relations budget. Yet, an equal number of these companies do. A small number have only public relations department employees' dues in this budget.

Table 14

Employee Membership Dues in Public Relations Budget

	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	50	10
	100%	100%
Not Part of Budget	40.0%	40.0%
Part of Budget	44.0%	40.0%
Only for Public Relations Employees	16.0%	20.0%

Activities and Materials

General Areas or Functions

Larger retailers and wholesalers were asked to classify nine areas or functions to determine whether these areas were

- The direct responsibility of the public relations executive
- The supervisory responsibility of the public relations executive
- Shared with another department
- The responsibility of another department
- Not assigned
- Handled by an outside firm.

When all results were totaled, these nine areas fell into three distinct groups:

- Areas clearly within the domain of the public relations function:
  - — Media Relations
  - — Community Relations
- Areas often considered part of the public relations function:
  - — Government Relations
  - — Customer Relations
  - — Trade Relations
  - — Investor-Stockholder Relations
- Areas normally the responsibility of another department:
  - — Employee Relations
  - — Sales, Marketing, Advertising
  - — Labor Relations

Customer Relations, was an area defined differently for retailers and wholesalers. The survey differentiated between the retailer customer, or the person who shops in the store and, the wholesaler customer, or the retailer who buys from the wholesaler. The respondents were asked to answer accordingly.

Table 15

Areas Which are the Responsibility of, or Supervised by, the Public Relations Executive

	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	55	13
Media Relations	72%	92%
Community Relations	69%	58%
Government Relations	57%	50%
Customer Relations	56%	33%
Trade Relations	37%	55%
Investor-Stockholder Relations	25%	54%
Sales, Marketing, Advertising	22%	17%
Labor Relations	23%	17%
Employee Relations	25%	17%

Detailed Activities

Within each of the nine responsibility areas listed in Table 16, there are many specific functions such as speech writing, employee research, store tours, and audio visual presentations. Large retailers and wholesalers were asked in detail who had the responsibility for over 50 different specific activities.

Within the Media Relations area, for instance, wholesalers and large retailers were asked about the spokesman for the media. For 63 percent of these companies, the media spokesman was in the public relations department. For twenty-five percent of the companies, public relations shares this activity with another department. Press releases, news stories, and feature articles are the responsibility of the public relations department for 68 percent of the companies.

In the community relations area, speaking to community groups was often a shared activity, 48 percent. Contributions and donations were frequently handled by the public relations department, 68 percent. The public relations department usually identified the company personnel to speak at events, 58 percent. In large retail companies, the public relations department will often supervise customer complaints, 54 percent.

Other areas which are usually the responsibility of the public relations department include:

- Redirecting inquiries for the media 78.0%
- Participating in the activities of management 70.3%
- Maintaining public relations reference materials 70.3%
- Maintaining contact with the media 68.2%
- Writing press releases, news stories, feature articles 67.7%
- Serving as liaison to other company departments 62.5%
- Providing background for the media 62.1%
- identifying company personnel to speak at events 57.6%
- Arranging press conferences 56.9%
- Participating in the formulation of company policy 56.5%
- Supervising programs which identify the company with the public 53.7%
- Coordinating film crew appearances in stores 52.2%

Because companies are organized in different ways, there is often no one clear cut method among them for distributing responsibility or activities. For example, in coordinating or conducting tours of supermarkets and distribution centers, 27 percent of the companies said this was the responsibility of the public relations department, 39 percent said this was a shared responsibility, 18 percent said this was the responsibility of another department, and 15 percent did not assign this activity.

The activity of developing audio visual presentations was also handled in different ways. In 21 percent of the companies, this activity belongs to the public relations department; for 38 percent, it is a shared responsibility; for 23 percent, it is another department's responsibility; for 14 percent, it is not assigned; and, for five percent, an outside firm is retained to prepare the audio visual presentations.

Detailed tables showing the results for all activities are presented in the appendix.

Public Relations Materials

In each of the three questionnaires distributed, executives were asked if they now use, would like available, would find unlikely to be useful or would find unnecessary certain public relations materials. Before reviewing what material companies would like available, it is interesting to note what items the *majority* of public relations executives are now using.

Independents:

- Trade publications
- Industry data.

Larger Retailers:

- Industry data
- Trade publications
- Customer research
- Background pieces on issues.

Wholesalers:

- Trade publications
- Information for employee publications
- Industry data.

For materials the public relations executive would like available, the results show that the one item wanted most by independents, larger retailers, and wholesalers was *material on specific subjects*.

Other items wanted by the majority of independents were (in order of preference):

- A public relation manual
- Information for employee publications
- Material for customers
- Media guidelines
- Audio visuals
- Effective public speaking guidelines.

Materials requested by the majority of larger retailers included (in order of preference):

- A public relations manual
- Media guidelines
- Audio-visuals
- A speech bank
- Materials for customers
- Food industry cartoons
- Effective public speaking guidelines.

Table 16

Public Relations Materials: Would Like Available/Now Use

	Independents		Large Retailers		Wholesalers	
	Would Like %	Now Use %	Would Like %	Now Use %	Would Like %	Now Use %
Materials on Specific Subject	68.2	9.3	62.3	37.7	66.7	33.3
Public Relations Manuals	60.2	14.8	61.1	27.8	36.4	45.5
Audio Visuals	52.3	15.9	56.6	22.6	41.7	41.7
Media Guidelines	55.0	5.5	58.5	34.0	54.5	36.4
Materials for Customers	55.5	30.0	54.7	34.0	45.5	18.2
Information for Employee Publications	57.0	11.2	48.1	40.7	18.2	63.6
Effective Public Speaking Guidelines	51.8	11.8	50.0	24.1	25.0	33.3
Speech Bank	48.1	3.7	55.8	17.3	54.5	18.2
Food Industry Cartoons for Magazines	41.6	7.3	51.9	19.2	45.5	9.1
Consumer Research	46.7	38.3	35.8	62.3	66.7	25.5
Background Pieces on Issues	35.3	32.4	37.3	58.8	50.0	41.7
Industry Data	31.8	50.9	30.8	65.4	50.0	50.0
Press Kits	28.7	3.7	37.7	15.1	50.0	6.7
Radio-TV Monitor Reports	28.4	4.6	40.7	24.1	58.3	8.3
News Clipping Service	23.9	6.4	34.0	18.9	41.7	33.3
Speaker's Bureau	22.6	3.8	40.7	11.1	66.7	0.0
Trade Publications	17.1	73.0	16.7	64.8	0.0	91.7

Outside Consultants

When asked whether outside public relations consultants were ever retained, responses were quite different. On the average, 80 percent of all independent retailers and 52 percent of all larger retailers have never retained an outside public relations consultant. For wholesalers, only 31 percent had not retained an outside public relations consultant at some time, see Table 17.

Table 17

Have Retained Outside Public Relations Consultant

	Independents	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	116	52	13
	100%	100%	100%
No	80.2%	51.9%	30.8%
Paid Professional	10.3%	34.6%	86.7%
Wholesaler	9.5%	13.5%	NA

NA = Not Applicable

But when companies do hire public relations consultants, it is for a wide variety of projects. Larger retailers will usually hire consultants for media relations and for press relations. Independent retailers have often hired public relations consultants for special events, such as the Special Olympics. Consultants were also hired by companies for consumer studies, audio visual presentations, policy changes, financial relations, annual reports and meetings, speech writing, store openings, government relations and human resources.

Besides using outside professional public relations consultants, 10 percent of the independents and 14 percent of larger retailers used the public relations services of their wholesalers.

Media

Most companies have designated at least one person to speak to the media. Only 1.8% of all companies who completed the survey said they have no one who is authorized to speak to the media. Eighty-seven percent of all independents have been contacted by a reporter. Thirty-four percent of all companies have only one person who is authorized to speak to the media. Within the three types of companies, there are again major differences. For independents, 40 percent have only one authorized person to speak to the media; for larger retailers, this is 28 percent; and for wholesalers, 17 percent. The majority of companies have a primary spokesman with one or more secondary contacts.

Tables 18 and 19 give a profile of the primary media contact. In smaller companies this primary media contact is usually the top executive, 66 percent. For in larger retailers the top executive is the primary contact in only 31 percent of the companies. However, for only 9 percent of the wholesalers is it the top executive. Wholesalers rely more on director-level management for their primary media contact, 36 percent. Larger retailers also rely on vice presidents, 25 percent, and directors, 18 percent.

Table 18

Title of Primary Media Contact

	Independents	Large Retailers	Wholesalers
Total Companies	105	49	11
	100%	100%	100%
Top Executive	65.8%	30.6%	9.1%
Vice Presidents	14.3%	36.7%	9.1%
Director	1.9%	18.4%	36.4%
Other	18.0%	14.3%	45.4%

Table 19

Function of the Primary Media Contact

	Independents	Large Retailers
Total Companies	87	43
	100%	100%
Top Executive	80.5%	32.6%
Public Relations/Affairs	1.1%	20.9%
Advertising	1.1%	9.3%
Other	17.3%	37.2%

Secondary media contacts in retail companies are described by title and function in Tables 20 and 21.

Table 20

Title of Secondary Media Contacts*

	Independents	Large Retailer
Total Companies	86	39
Top Executive	10.5%	33.4%
Vice Presidents	23.3%	51.2%
Director	5.8%	17.9%
Store Manager	25.6%	0.0%
No One	20.9%	2.6%

*More than one response accepted.

Table 21

Function of Secondary Media Contacts*

	Independents	Large Retailers
Total Companies	45	33
Top Executive	17.8%	39.4%
Operations	62.2%	15.2%
Advertising, Marketing, Sales	2.2%	21.2%
Public Relations/Affairs	0.0%	15.1%

*More than one response accepted.

Community Groups

Over three quarters of all companies allow more than one person to speak to community groups. Subject matter and the availability of the person who is to speak are the two main determinants in selecting speakers. Selection also depends on the assignment by a company executive, type of group requesting a speaker, and location of the group.

Tables 22 and 23 give a profile by title and function of the primary community spokesman and Tables 24 and 25 give a profile of the type of person who is the secondary spokesman to community groups.

Table 22

Title of Primary Community Spokesmen

	Independents	Large Retailers
Total Companies	104	47
	100%	100%
Top Executive	63.5%	17.8%
Vice Presidents	12.5%	36.2%
Director	6.7%	10.6%
Other	17.3%	36.2%

Table 23

Function of Primary Community Spokesman

	Independents	Large Retailers
Total Companies	92	41
	100%	100%
Top Executive	72.8%	17.1%
Operations	12.0%	7.3%
Public Relations/Affairs	1.1%	17.1%
Consumer Affairs	3.3%	17.1%
Specific Department Relevant to Request	1.1%	14.6%
Other	9.7%	26.8%

Table 24

Title of Secondary Community Spokesmen*

	Independents	Large Retailers
Total Companies	84	29
Top Executive	13.1%	13.7%
Vice Presidents	25.0%	31.0%
Director	4.8%	20.7%
Manager	3.6%	13.8%
Store Manager	23.8%	13.8%
No One	14.3%	0.0%

*More than one response accepted.

Table 25

Function of Secondary Community Spokesmen*

	Independents	Large Retailers
Total Companies	47	26
Top Executive	21.3%	11.5%
Operations	57.4%	23.1%
Consumer Affairs	6.4%	15.4%
Human Resource	2.1%	19.2%
Specific Department	4.3%	11.5%
Public Relations/Affairs	0.0%	19.2%

*More than once response accepted.

Appendix Tables

The following tables contain all the results from the question regarding the responsibility of various functions and activities. For each category two responses are given, the first for the large retailers and the second for the wholesalers. For example, in Table A, Media Relations was found to be the responsibility of the public relations executive in 57 percent of the large retail companies and in 58 percent of the wholesale companies.

Table A

Organization of Function
Large Retailers/Wholesalers

	Responsibility of Public Relations Executive	Supervised by Public Relations Executive	Shared with Another Department	Responsibility of Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Media Relations	57 / 58	15 / 33	15 / 8	11 / 0	2 / 0	0 / 0
Community Relations	42 / 42	27 / 17	19 / 42	8 / 0	2 / 0	2 / 0
Government Relations	49 / 42	8 / 8	13 / 0	21 / 33	4 / 0	6 / 17
Customer Relations	28 / 17	28 / 17	30 / 17	14 / 50	0 / 0	0 / 0
Employee Relations	8 / 8	17 / 8	26 / 42	47 / 42	0 / 0	2 / 0
Labor Relations	9 / 17	13 / 0	6 / 17	72 / 58	0 / 0	0 / 8
Shareholder Relations	15 / 31	10 / 23	23 / 8	5 / 31	0 / 0	17 / 8
Trade Relations	23 / 36	14 / 18	21 / 9	37 / 27	0 / 0	6 / 9
Sales, Marketing, Advertising	15 / 8	7 / 8	20 / 33	57 / 50	0 / 0	0 / 0

Table B

Media Relations Activities
Large Retailer/Wholesalers

	Responsibility of				
	Public Relations Department/ Individual	Shared with Another Department	Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%
Spokesman to the Media	62 / 69	24 / 31	9 / 0	2 / 0	4 / 0
Redirects Inquiries for the Media	78 / 77	16 / 23	2 / 0	2 / 0	2 / 0
Writes Press Releases, etc.	62 / 92	23 / 8	6 / 0	6 / 0	4 / 0
Provides Background for the Media	63 / 58	20 / 42	7 / 0	2 / 0	7 / 0
Maintains Contacts with the Media	68 / 69	13 / 23	8 / 0	2 / 0	9 / 8
Gives Teleision Interviews	45 / 58	25 / 25	15 / 8	0 / 0	15 / 8
Arranges Press Conferences	54 / 69	10 / 23	6 / 0	6 / 0	25 / 8
Coordinates when Camera/ Crew Appear in the Store/Center	54 / 46	15 / 31	11 / 0	17 / 23	4 / 0

Table C

Community Relations Activities
Large Retailers/Wholesalers

	Responsibility of				
	Public Relations Department/ Individual	Shared with Another Department	Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%
Speaks to Community Groups	33 / 23	44 / 62	13 / 8	0 / 0	9 / 8
Conducts/Coordinates Tours of Stores	24 / 42	39 / 42	19 / 17	0 / 0	19 / 0
Coordinates Donations with Community Groups	72 / 50	7 / 8	19 / 42	0 / 0	2 / 0
Identifies Company Personnel to Speak at Events	61 / 42	20 / 58	7 / 0	0 / 0	11 / 0
Develops Contacts with Community Groups	48 / 39	32 / 54	7 / 8	0 / 0	13 / 0

Table D

Customer Relations Activities
Large Retailers/Wholesalers

	Responsibility of				
	Public Relations Department/ Individual	Shared with Another Department	Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%
Produces Informational Booklets, Bag Stuffers for Customers	35 / 8	35 / 31	26 / 39	2 / 8	2 / 15
Produces Institutional Booklets, Bag Stuffers for Customers	32 / 8	35 / 31	24 / 39	2 / 8	7 / 15
Produces Promotional Booklets, Bag Stuffers for Customers	32 / 8	32 / 39	32 / 39	2 / 8	4 / 8
Supervises Customer Complaints	54 / 8	30 / 25	17 / 58	0 / 0	0 / 8
Supervise Progress which identify Your Company with Public	54 / 8	26 / 31	15 / 39	2 / 0	4 / 23
Coordinate Institutional Advertising	33 / 0	17 / 15	44 / 62	0 / 0	6 / 23
Conducts Research	15 / 0	30 / 23	35 / 62	4 / 0	17 / 15

Table E

Government Relations Activities
Large Retailers/Wholesalers

	Responsibility of				
	Public Relations Department/ Individual	Shared with Another Department	Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%
Testifies Before Government Bodies	41 / 54	15 / 0	26 / 31	6 / 0	13 / 15
Liaison With Government Bodies	41 / 54	20 / 0	24 / 31	6 / 0	9 / 5
Communications With Government Officials	41 / 46	28 / 8	17 / 31	4 / 0	11 / 15

Table F

Disseminate Emergency Information
Large Retailers/Wholesalers

	Responsibility of				
	Public Relations Department/ Individual	Shared with Another Department	Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%
Boycotts	40 / 42	26 / 25	19 / 17	2 / 8	13 / 8
Demonstrations	40 / 42	26 / 25	19 / 17	2 / 8	13 / 8
Strikes	38 / 33	28 / 33	19 / 17	2 / 8	13 / 8
Severe Weather Conditions	33 / 25	27 / 42	23 / 17	0 / 0	17 / 17
Remodeling	37 / 25	25 / 42	30 / 33	0 / 0	7 / 0
Fire	35 / 17	26 / 50	31 / 33	0 / 0	8 / 0
Extortion Attempts	23 / 25	27 / 33	31 / 25	2 / 0	17 / 17
Recalls	15 / 17	38 / 42	30 / 25	2 / 0	15 / 15
Accidents	23 / 25	30 / 42	34 / 17	2 / 0	11 / 17
Robberies	19 / 25	33 / 33	37 / 25	2 / 0	10 / 17

Table G

Company Relations Activities
Large Retailers/Wholesalers

	Responsibility of				
	Public Relations Department/ Individual	Shared with Another Department	Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%
Writes Speeches	42 / 58	29 / 42	4 / 0	0 / 0	25 / 0
Develops Audio Visual Presentations	19 / 31	34 / 54	26 / 8	6 / 0	15 / 8
Prepares Position Papers/ Policy Statements	28 / 25	43 / 42	21 / 25	0 / 0	8 / 8
Maintains A Collection of Public Relations Reference Materials	67 / 84	14 / 8	6 / 0	0 / 0	14 / 8
Participates in the Activity of Management	71 / 67	23 / 33	6 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0
Participates in the Formation of Company Policy	60 / 42	30 / 50	10 / 8	0 / 0	0 / 0
Identifies Company Personnel to Speak at Events	57 / 25	22 / 67	8 / 0	0 / 0	14 / 8

Table H

Employee Relations Activities
Large Retailers and Wholesalers

	Responsibility of				
	Public Relations Department/ Individual	Shared with Another Department	Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%
Makes Internal Company Announcements on Personnel Promotions	42 / 50	30 / 42	26 / 8	0 / 0	2 / 0
Prepares Policy Manuals	21 / 23	30 / 46	47 / 31	0 / 0	2 / 0
Prepares Internal Publications	36 / 46	25 / 39	34 / 8	0 / 0	6 / 8
Organizes Employee Meetings	17 / 25	34 / 33	45 / 42	0 / 0	4 / 0
Organizes Employee Social Functions	12 / 15	35 / 54	42 / 23	0 / 0	12 / 8
Conducts Employee Research	11 / 8	13 / 46	61 / 46	2 / 0	13 / 0
Serves as Liaison to Other Company Departments	65 / 50	19 / 42	6 / 0	0 / 0	10 / 8

Table I

Investor Relations Activities
Large Retailers/Wholesalers

	Responsibility of				
	Public Relations Department/ Individual	Shared with Another Department	Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%
Communicates with Shareholders	13 / 50	24 / 25	44 / 17	0 / 0	18 / 8
Prepares Annual and Quarterly Reports	20 / 46	20 / 23	44 / 15	0 / 8	16 / 8
Communicates with Stock Analysts	5 / 31	19 / 31	54 / 31	0 / 0	23 / 8
Coordinates Annual Stockholder's Meetings	9 / 33	21 / 33	47 / 17	0 / 0	23 / 17

Table J

Trade Relations Activities
Large Retailers/Wholesalers

	Responsibility of				
	Public Relations Department/ Individual	Shared with Another Department	Another Department	Retain Outside Firm	Not Assigned
	%	%	%	%	%
Spokesman to Suppliers	17 / 15	28 / 39	43 / 46	0 / 0	11 / 0
Spokesman to Trade Groups	17 / 17	34 / 42	36 / 42	0 / 0	13 / 0
Coordinates Annual Supplier's Functions	9 / 15	19 / 23	47 / 46	0 / 0	25 / 15
Liaison with Independents	NA / 15	NA / 31	NA / 54	NA / 0	NA / 0

NA = Not Applicable